



March 31, 2004

The Honorable Edward Markey  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Markey:

As organizations committed to reducing and preventing tobacco-caused disease, disability and death, we are writing to state our support for the Cigarette Fire Safety Act of 2004 which you, Representative King and others plan to introduce this week.

The Cigarette Fire Safety Act would provide for a federal cigarette fire safety standard for the manufacture and importation of cigarettes. This standard would require cigarette manufacturers to use fire-resistant paper that is much less likely to continue to burn if left unattended, thus eliminating the cause of many accidental fires. Cigarettes are the leading cause of fire death in the United States, accounting for an estimated 30 percent of all fire deaths. Each year, cigarette-caused fires result in almost 1,000 deaths, of which almost 100 are children, more than 2,000 serious injuries, and an estimated \$4 billion in property losses and health care expenses nationally. The technology exists to reduce these harms, as the tobacco industry itself has proven that fire-resistant paper is available and the widespread use of it will not cause a significant price increase.

The State of New York has led the way in adopting fire-safe cigarette standards, and they are set to go into effect on June 30. The Markey/King legislation would require the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to enact regulations that would closely mirror these New York State fire safe standards, and contains a provision making explicit that this legislation, if enacted, would not preempt the New York State fire safety standards or any State standard that is more stringent than the CPSC's standards.

The public health community strongly believes the standards in the Markey/King legislation provide the appropriate level of safeguards to protect individuals and families from unintentional cigarette-caused fires.

As you are well aware, the death of five children and their parents in a tragic, cigarette-caused fire in 1979 led the late Massachusetts Representative Joe Moakley to embark on a years-long effort to create standards to reduce the risk of unintentional fires. This legislation is a fitting tribute to Representative Moakley's tireless work.

We thank you for your strong leadership regarding this important public health matter.

Sincerely,

American Cancer Society  
American Heart Association  
American Lung Association  
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids